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By SEN. JACOB K. JAVITS

THERE IS a special problem connected with federal aid to education which bears discussion. Most children attend public schools, but a large number (31.5 per cent in our state) go to privately supported schools, mostly (26.2 per cent in this state) Catholic schools. Children attending parochial schools are equally Americans; they have their rights. But the Constitution, as interpreted by the Supreme Court and by Pres. Kennedy, forbids direct aid to such religious schools. This problem, above all, has blocked federal aid to education. It is a serious, intricate difficulty, involving deep emotions.

This problem cannot be helped by confused talk. Recently, my opponent was asked by the United Parents Assn., a group opposing parochial school aid, whether he approved such aid; his answer was a clear-cut no. Then he was questioned by Citizens for Educational Freedom, which supports aid to Catholic schools; his answer pleased them so much that they indorsed him.

I don't wish to believe my opponent is playing politics but prefer to believe he simply has not comprehended the complexity of this matter. He has not sat in Senate hearings listening to witnesses, with great logic and sincerity, argue diametrically opposed position.

What we really seek in this torturous area is the national interest—that is to have the finest possible education for all children; a well-educated nation is the only hope for keeping the U.S. moving along a sensible path.

What does this mean in terms of practical legislation? We must put first things first. Most children attend public schools; these public schools badly need federal aid. Let us, therefore, enact legislation which accomplishes this and does so in a way that will become law.

The proper way to handle private school aid is legislation tied to the national interest where we can work out the special difficulties involved. I am for aiding private schools but am for aid which does not violate the Constitution. Such legislation should provide help for private schools in teaching subjects not concerned with religion but with the secular national interest and which, therefore, does not incur constitutional objections. Specifically, I propose that aid be devised according to the formula in the National Defense Education Act: aid to private schools for teaching of secular subjects like science, math, English, modern languages and physical fitness. These are subjects essential to our nation; they serve the national interest and merit federal aid.



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Backward, March

from "Everyone But Thee and Me" by
Brown, \$3.95).

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